

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 and 16-19 are currently pending. Claims 1, 13, 16, and 17 have been amended and claim 15 has been cancelled. Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 1-12 are allowable and claims 15-17 contain allowable subject matter. Claim 1 has been amended to correct the objection noted by the Examiner and claims 16 and 17 have been amended to depend from claim 13, rather than cancelled claim 15.

The Examiner rejected claims 13 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nuss in view of Van Ranst. In addition, the Examiner rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nuss in view of Van Ranst, and Takahashi. The Examiner also rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nuss in view of Van Ranst, and Kelley.

Applicants have amended claim 13 to include the limitations of allowable claim 15. As such, claim 13 is allowable. In addition, claims 14 and 16-19, which depend from claim 13 are also allowable.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-14 and 16-19 are allowable and the application is in a condition for allowance.

The undersigned is available for telephone consultation during normal business hours.

Respectfully submitted,



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